

NEWFOUNDLAND,

—ITS—

Climate, Geographical Position, Resources, &c.,

—AND—

BENARES,

—THE—

SACRED CITY OF THE HINDUS.

TWO LECTURES DELIVERED BEFORE THE Y. M. C. A.,

—BY—

HEBER BUDDEN,

QUEBEC.

PRICE, - - - - - 25 Cents.

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PRINTED AT THE "MORNING CHRONICLE" OFFICE.

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A BRIEF SKETCH
OF THE
ISLAND OF NEWFOUNDLAND,
ITS
CLIMATE, RESOURCES, GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION, &c.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

IN presenting to your notice this evening, a brief description of the Island of Newfoundland, I do not wish to take credit for anything of a literary character, but merely to string together such facts as have been gathered from a residence in that Island during a number of years, with such extracts as I found necessary from different authors who have written on the above subject. If I shall be the means of enlightening even one individual, I shall consider myself amply repaid for my trouble, as really so little is known concerning this noble Island, that one would imagine it existed somewhere in the South Seas, instead of being within three days' sail of the port of Quebec. I shall commence by telling you that Newfoundland is situated east of the Gulf and River Saint Lawrence, which separate it from the American Continent on its western side, its north being bounded by the Straits of Belle-Isle, which are about from ten to twenty miles wide; its eastern and southern shores being washed by the great Atlantic. It lies between the latitudes of $46^{\circ} 37''$ and $51^{\circ} 40''$ North, and the longitudes of $52^{\circ} 41''$ and $59^{\circ} 31''$ West. It is the nearest to Europe of any part of America, the distance from St. John's to Port Valentia, on the West Coast of Ireland,

being 1,656 miles. Bouchette states its extreme length measured on a curve, from Cape Race to Grignet Bay, at 419 miles; its extreme width, from Cape Ray to Cape Bonavista, at about 300 miles; and its circuit at little short of 1,000 miles. Its area comprises about 36,000 square miles. The discovery of this large Island has been ascribed to different persons, but I believe it cannot be disputed that it is due to John Cabot, a Venetian, who fell in with that portion of the coast called Bonavista, while on a voyage of discovery, on the 24th June, 1497, and without making any stay here, coasted along the Continent of America, until he found himself in 38° North, when being short of provisions, he returned to England, taking with him from Prince Edward Island (then called St. John) three of the aborigines. Of course it will be necessary to be very brief in all these particulars, for time will not permit of my enlarging on them. I may state that Cabot gave it the name of Bac-calaos, being the Indian name for codfish. In 1534 Jacques Cartier arrived at Cape Bonavista, and on his return to France, was most favorably received. About this time several attempts were made to colonize Newfoundland. "Master Robert Home, a merchant of London, with divers other gentlemen," sailed in 1536, thinking to winter there; but the crew were nearly starved to death, and compelled to resort to the most loathsome expedients, and would have perished had they not met with a French ship laden with provisions, which they seized and brought to England. Henry VIII, of England, satisfied the French claims for indemnity, by paying for the seized vessel. Europeans, when they first began to form their fishing establishments, found on the Coast a considerable number of natives belonging to a particular tribe of Red Indians. This color, which they exhibited still more decidedly than the races on the Continent, is ascribed to the use of a vegetable juice, with which their whole body was anointed, but it has been pretty well established that it was a species of red ochre which

they used. A quantity of the latter material was found in nearly all their wigwams, so that no doubt their color may be ascribed to the last mentioned article. Their intercourse for sometime, as indeed usually happens, was friendly, and they mixed familiarly with the strangers, aiding them in those pursuits which were congenial to their own habits; soon, however, quarrels arose, and as they were an exceedingly jealous people, there may have been cause for this passion being aroused by the incautiousness of the whites, who, in their turn, accused the red men of stealing the materials for the fishery and even its produce. The settlers, who were generally men of fierce tempers, and armed with powerful weapons, carried on the contest in a manner peculiarly ruthless, hunting and shooting the natives like deer. It is recorded that several attempts had been made to open up a friendly intercourse with these tribes, and in 1760 under Governor Wall, an attempt was made by one Scott and others, which was attended with signal failure for both were killed together with their companions. In 1827, we find that an institution called the Boethic, from a native appellation of the people, had been formed with a view of again trying the possibility of opening a friendly intercourse, should any of the tribe be found remaining. To forward the humane intentions of this body, McCormack, who on a former occasion had visited the interior, set out this year with a party of Micmac Indians, and ascending the River Exploits, crossed the country to the head of White Bay. At about half way thither, at a portage called the Indian path, he found vestiges of a family who had evidently been there in the spring or summer of the preceding year. They had possessed two canoes, had left a spear shaft 18 feet long, with fragments of boats and dresses, and had stripped a number of the birch and spruce trees of their rinds, the inner part of which they used for food. Further on he came to the remains of a village consisting of eight to ten Wigwams, each

capable of containing six to twenty persons. There were pits to preserve the stores, and the relics of a vapor bath. On the banks of a beautiful sheet of water called Red Indian Lake, several clusters of huts were found, but all had been deserted. There was a canoe twenty feet long which appeared to have been driven on shore. Wood repositories for the dead were framed with great care, the bodies wrapped in skins, with which were a variety of small images, models of canoes, arms, and culinary utensils. The party ascended the River Exploits, continuing to find similar traces of habitations, but long abandoned. There were fences to entrap deer extending in a continuous line at least thirty miles, which must have required some five hundred men to keep them in repair, but all is now relinquished and gone to ruin. Thus ended this philanthropic search prosecuted at the expense of that benevolent society, began with hope and expectation and ending in disappointment. There was another tribe of Indians occupying different parts of the interior called Micmacs or hunting Indians. Their sole study seemed to be the destruction of birds and beasts, whose cries they imitated with superior skill, and on whose flesh they existed. These exhibited a considerable mixture of French blood, and had been converted to a form of the Roman Catholic Religion, and were visited by a priest of that persuasion, at the different settlements, once every summer. I should have stated that Mr. McCormack had already crossed the Island in 1822, and his journal is of such an interesting nature that I cannot forbear making a few extracts from it. His route lay through the central portion of the Island, from Trinity Bay on the east, to St. George's Bay on the west coast, as he considered this to be the direction in which the natural characteristics of the interior were likely to be most decidedly exhibited. Having secured the services of an Indian as companion and made all necessary preparations for such an arduous undertaking, he embarked at

St. John's for Trinity Bay on the 30th August. After having travelled some ten days without anything worth recording having happened, he says "On looking back towards the sea-coast, the scene was magnificent. We discovered that under the cover of the forest, we had been uniformly ascending ever since we left the salt water, and then soon arrived at the summit of what we saw to be a great mountain ridge that seems to serve as a barrier between the sea and the interior. The black dense forest through which we had pilgrimaged presented a novel picture, appearing spotted with bright yellow marshes, and a few glassy lakes in its bosom, some of which we had passed close by without seeing them. In the westward, to our inexpressible delight, the interior broke in sublimity before us. What a contrast did this present to the conjectures entertained of Newfoundland! The hitherto mysterious interior lay unfolded before us—a boundless scene—a vast basin. The eye strides again and again over a succession of northerly and southerly ranges of green plains, marbled with woods and lakes of every form and extent, a picture of all the luxurious scenes of national cultivation receding into invisibleness. The imagination hovers in the distance, and clings involuntarily to the undulating horizon of vapor in the far west, until it is lost. A new world seemed to invite us onward, or rather we claimed the dominion, and were impatient to proceed to take possession. Fancy carried us swiftly across the Island. Obstacles of every kind were dispelled and despised; primitiveness, omnipotence, and tranquillity were stamped upon every thing so forcibly, that the mind was hurled back thousands of years, and the man left denuded of the mental fabric which a knowledge of ages of human experience and of time may have reared within him. But to look around us before we advance. The great external features of the eastern portion of the main body of the island are seen from these commanding heights. Overland communication between the

bays of the east, north, and south coasts, it appears, might be easily established. The chief obstacles to be overcome, as far as regards the mere way, seem to lie in crossing the mountain belt of twenty or forty miles wide on which we stood, in order to reach the open low interior. The nucleus of this belt is exhibited in the form of a semi-circular chain of insulated passes and round-backed granite hills, generally lying N.E. and S.W. of each other in the rear of Bonavista, Trinity, Placentia, and Fortune Bays. To the southward of us, in the direction of Piper's Hole in Placentia Bay, one of these conical hills, very conspicuous, I named "Mount Clarence." Our view extended more than forty miles in all directions; the high land, it has already been observed, bounded the low interior in the west. We descended into the bosom of the interior. The plains which shone so brilliantly are steppes or savannas composed of fine black compact peat mould, formed by the growth and decay of mosses. They are in the form of extensive, gently undulating beds, stretching northward and southward, with running waters and lakes, skirted with woods lying between them. Their yellow-green surfaces are sometimes uninterrupted by either tree or shrub, rock or any irregularity, for more than ten miles. They are chequered everywhere upon the surface by deep beaten deer-paths, and are in reality magnificent natural deer parks, adorned with wood and water. Our progress over the savanna country was attended with great labor and consequently slow, being at the rate of from five to seven miles a day to the westward, while the distance walked was equivalent to three or four times as much. Always inclining our course to the westward we traversed in ever direction, partly from choice in order to view and examine the country, and partly from the necessity to get round the extremities of lakes and woods, and to look for game for subsistence. We were nearly a month in passing

over one savanna after another. Our attention was arrested twice by observing the tracks of a man on the savannas, after a minute examination, we concluded that one of them was that of a Micmac or Mountaineer Indian who had been hunting here in the preceding year, and from the point of the foot being steep, that he was going laden with fur to the Bay of Despair. Being now near the centre of the island, upwards of one hundred and ten miles from the most inland part of Trinity Bay, about ninety miles of the distance being across the savannas, we had not yet seen a trace of the Red Indians. It had been supposed that all the central parts of the island were occupied by those people, and I had been daily looking out for them. They were, however, more likely to be fallen in with farther to the westward. While surveying a large lake on the S.W., we descried a faint column of smoke issuing from amongst islands near the south shore, about five miles distant. The time we hoped had at last come to meet the Red Indians. It was too late in the day to reconnoitre; and my Indian went in pursuit of a herd of deer in another direction, we having no provision for supper. At sunset he did not meet me at the appointed wood in a valley hard by; nor did he return by midnight; nor at all. I durst not exhibit a fire on the hill as a beacon to him, in sight of the strange encampment. At day break the slender white column of smoke was still more distinctly seen. There were human beings there, and, deserted as I was, I felt an irresistible desire to approach my fellow creatures whether they should prove friendly or hostile. Having put my gun and pistols in the best order, and no appearance of my Indian at noon, I left my knapsack and all encumbrances and descended through thickets and marshes towards the nearest part of the lake about two miles distant. The white sandy shore formed of disintegrated granite, was much trodden over by deer and other animals, but there

were no marks of man discernible. The extent of the lake was uncertain; but it was apparent that it would require two days at least to walk round either end to the nearest point on the opposite shore to the occupied island. I therefore kept on my own side to discover who the party was. By firing off my gun, if the party were Red Indians, they would in all probability move off quickly on hearing the report, and they having no fire-arms my fire would not be answered; if they were other Indians, my fire would be answered. I fired—by and by, the report of a strange gun travelled among the islands from the direction of the smoke, and thus all my doubts and apprehensions were dispelled. The report of this gun was the first noise I had heard caused by man except by my Indian and self for more than five weeks, and it excited my peculiar feelings. In about an hour my Indian unexpectedly made his appearance. He stated that having shot a stag about two miles from our encampment and getting benighted he had slept in the woods. Soon afterwards to my great delight, there appeared among some woody inlets in front, which precluded the view of the other side of the lake, a small canoe with a man seated in the stern paddling softly towards us, with an air of serenity and independence possessed by Indians. After a brotherly salutation with me, and the two Indians kissing each other, the hunter proved to be unable to speak English or French. They, however, soon understood one another; for the stranger, although a mountaineer from Labrador, could speak a little of the Micmac language, his wife being a Micmac. The mountaineer tribe belongs to Labrador, and he told us, that he had come to Newfoundland, hearing that it was a better country for hunting than his own, and that he was now on his way from St. George's Bay to the Bay of Despair to spend the winter with the Indians there. He had left St. George's Bay two months before, and expected to be at the Bay of Despair two weeks hence. This was his second

year in Newfoundland; he was accompanied by his wife only. My Indian told him that I had come to see the rocks and the deer, the beaver, and the Red Indians, and to tell King George what was going on in the middle of that country. He says St. George's Bay was about two weeks walk from us if we knew the best way; and invited us over with him in his canoe to rest a day at his camp, where he said he had plenty of venison, which was readily agreed to on my part. The Island on which the mountaineer's camp was, lay about three miles distant. The varying scenery as we paddled towards it amongst a number of inlets, all of granite and mostly covered with spruce and birch trees, was beautiful. His canoe was similar to those described to have been used by the ancient Britons on the invasion of the Romans. It was made of wicker wood, covered with deerskins sewed together stretched on it, nearly of the usual form of canoes, with a bar or beam across the middle, and one at each end to strengthen it. The skin covering, flesh side out, was fastened or laced to the gunwales with thongs of the same material. Owing to decay and wear, it requires to be renewed once in from six to twelve weeks. It is in those temporary barks that the Indians of Newfoundland of the present day navigate the lakes and rivers of the interior. They are easily carried, owing to their lightness, across the portages from one water to another, and, when damaged, easily repaired. His wigwam was situated in the centre of a wooded islet at which we arrived before sunset. The approach from the landing-place was by a mossy carpeted avenue formed by the trees having been cut down in that direction for firewood. The sight of a fire not of our kindling, of which we were to partake seemed hospitality. The wigwam was occupied by his wife, seated on a deerskin, busy sewing together skins of the same kind to renew the outside of the canoe, which we had just found required it. A large Newfoundland dog, her only companion in her

husband's absence, had welcomed us at the landing-place with signs of the greatest joy. Sylvan happiness reigned here. His wigwam was of a semi-circular form, covered with birch rind and dried deer-skins, the fire on the foreground outside. Abundance and neatness pervaded the encampment. On horizontal poles over the fire hung quantities of venison steak, being smoke dried. The hostess was cheerful, and a supper of the best the chase could afford was soon set before us, on sheets of birch rinds. They told me to "make their camp my own," and to use everything in it as such. Kindness so eloquently offered by these people of nature in their solitude, commenced to soften those feelings which had been fortified against receiving any comfort except that of my own administering. The excellence of the venison and of the flesh of the young beavers, could not be surpassed. A cake of hard deer's fat with scraps of suet toasted brown intermixed, was eaten with the meat; the soup was the drink. Our hostess after supper sang several Indian songs, at my request; they were plaintive, and sung in a high key. The song of a female and her contentment in this remote and secluded spot, exhibited the strange diversity there is in human nature. My Indian entertained us incessantly until nearly daylight with stories about what he had seen in St. John's. Our toils were for the time forgotten. The mountaineer had occupied this camp for about two weeks, deer being very plentiful all round the lake. His larder, which was a kind of shed erected on the rocky shore for the sake of a free circulation of air, was in reality a well stocked butcher's stall, containing parts of some half a dozen fat deer, also the carcasses of beavers, otters, musk-rats, and martins, all methodically laid out. His property consisted of two guns and ammunition, an axe, some good culinary utensils of iron and tin, blankets, an apartment of dried deerskins to sleep in, and with which to cover his wigwam, the latter with the hair off,

a collection of skins to sell at the sea-coast, consisting of those of beaver, otter, martin, muskrat, and deer, the last dried and the hair off, also a stock of dried venison in bundles. Animal flesh of every kind in steaks, without salt, smoked dry on the fire for forty-eight hours, becomes nearly as light and portable as cork, and will keep sound for years. It thus forms a good substitute for bread, and by being boiled for two hours recovers most of its original qualities. This lake is nine or ten miles in length by from one to three in breadth, joined by a strait to another lake nearly as large, lying S.E., called Burnt Bay Lake, and is one of the chains of lakes connected by the East Bay River of the Bay of Despair, already noticed as running through Serpentine Lake. which forms a part of the grand route of the Indians. We left the veteran mountaineer much pleased with our having fallen in with him. He landed us from his canoe on the south shore of the lake, and we took our departure for the westward along the south side. Winter was now setting in and on the morning of the 26th October we found three feet of snow on the ground. Our provisions were exhausted, nor could we get through the snow to look for game. Our situation was truly miserable. The snow having shrunk a foot at least, from a thaw, we left our wretched encampment, and after a most laborious walk of six or eight miles through snow, thickets and swollen brooks, and passing many deer scraping holes in the snow with their hoofs to reach the lichens underneath without however, being able to get within shot of them—we not only reached the lake to the westward, but to our great joy also discovered, in consequence of meeting with some of their martin traps, the encampment of the Indians of whom we had been told by the mountaineer. The country now became mountainous, and almost destitute of wood. Deer became more numerous. Berries were very plentiful, and mostly in high perfection, although the snow had lately covered

them; indeed, the partridge berries were improved and in many places were literally red with them. The winter had now fairly set in. The ponds were all frozen over. The birds of passage had deserted the interior for the sea-coast, and the grouse had got on their winter coats; many hardships now awaited the traveller. The western territory is entirely primitive. No rocks appear but granitic. The only soil is peat, which varies in quality according to situation. In the valleys some patches are very similar to the savanna peat in the eastward. But as the peat ascends, it becomes shallow and lighter until it terminates at the summit of the mountains in a mere matting. Lichens occupy every station on the peat among the other plants, and on the bare rock. As we advanced westward the aspect of the country became more dreary, and the primitive features more boldly marked. Painted mountains of coarse red granite standing apart, lay in all directions northerly and southerly of each other. Most of them are partially shrouded with firs, bald and capped with snow. At the extreme south end we had to ford a rapid river of considerable size running to the southward, which from its position we inferred was "Little River" and which discharges at the south coast. We travelled over hills and across lakes about twenty miles, fording in that space two rivers running north-easterly, and which are the main source branches of the River Exploits. This large river has therefore a course of upwards of 200 miles in one direction, taking its rise in the S.W. angle of the island, and discharging in the N.E. part. We encamped at night at the southern extremity of what is said by Indians to be the most southern lake of the interior, frequented by the Red Indians, and through which was the main source branch of the River Exploits. The distance to St. George's Harbor is twenty-five miles or upwards, which part of the journey must be performed on foot, because no waters of any magnitude intervene. For nearly twenty miles west-

ward of this lake, the country is very bare, there being scarcely a thicket of wood. About eighteen miles west of the lake, from the summit of a snowy ridge which defines the west coast, we were rejoiced to get a view of the expansive ocean and St. George's Harbor. Had this prospect burst on us in the same manner a month earlier, it would have created in my mind a thousand pleasures, the impressions of which I was now too callous to receive; all was now, however, accomplished, and I hailed the glance of the sea as home, and as the parent of everything dear. There was scarcely any snow to be seen within several miles of the sea-coast, while the mountain range upon which we stood, and the interior in the rear, were covered. This range may be about two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and the snow capped mountains in N.E., are higher. The descent was now very precipitous and craggy. A rapid river called Flat Bay River, across which we were to ford, or, if swollen, to pass over upon a raft, flowed at the foot of the ridge. Upon the immediate banks of Flat Bay River there is some good birch, pine and spruce timber. The soil and shelter are even so good here, that the ground spruce (*Janus Canadensis*) bearing its red berries constitutes the chief underwood, as in the forests of Canada and Nova Scotia. On the afternoon of the 2nd November, we reached St. George's Harbor. The first houses we reached, two in number, close to the shore, belonged to Indians. They were nailed up, the owners not having returned from the interior, after their Fall hunting. The houses of the European residents lay on the west side of the harbor, which is here about a mile wide, and near the entrance; but a westerly gale of wind prevented any intercourse across. Having had no food for nearly two days we ventured to break open the door of one of the houses, and found what we wanted, provisions and cooking utensils. This happened to be the chief's house, and the provident man had a stock of halibut, eels, dried codfish, seal

oil, and two barrels of maize, or Indian corn flour. A party of Indians arrived from the interior, male and female, each carrying a load of furs. Our landlord was among them. Instead of appearing to notice with displeasure his door being broken open, and house occupied by strangers, he merely said, upon looking round and my offering an explanation, "suppose me here, you take all these things." We crossed the harbor and were received by the residents with open arms. Having now crossed the island, I cannot help thinking that my success was in part owing to the smallness of my party. Many together could not have so easily sustained themselves; and they would have multiplied the chances of casualties, and thereby of the requisition of the attendance and detention of the able. It is difficult to give an idea of or to form an estimate equivalent to the road-distance gone over. The toil and deprivation were such that hired men, or followers of any class would not have endured them." Such is the description of the Island given by Mr McCormack, and I am very sorry that his very interesting narrative had to be so much curtailed, but time would not permit of my dwelling longer on this part of my subject. The principal town on the Island of Newfoundland is St. Johns, it being the capital and the seat of the Legislature. It is situated about 60 miles to the eastward of Cape Race, a point well known as being the first land made by vessels coming across the Atlantic. The entrance to the harbor is singularly beautiful, the headlands being bold, rugged and lofty, and much admired for their picturesque grandeur. The one in the north called Signal Hill, attains an elevation of 700 feet above the sea level. It is a magnificent Harbor and affords anchorage for vessels of the largest burthen. The town is built chiefly on the side of a hill, and there are a number of fine buildings, the principal ones being the Government House, Parliament Buildings, the Protestant and Roman Catholic Cathedrals, the latter

being a most imposing edifice, with a number of lesser note. The population is estimated at 30,000, this may include some of the small out-ports near the capital. It is the seat of an Anglican and also of a Roman Catholic Bishopric, but a large majority of the population are Roman Catholics. The Anglican Cathedral is a very fine building, but it has never been completed. In 1816, St. Johns was almost destroyed by fire, and the inhabitants were reduced to extreme distress, relieved only by the prompt assistance of the neighboring colonies, and of the citizens of Boston, in the United States, by whom they were gratuitously supplied with food. The loss is said to have been upwards of £100,000, and 1,500 people were driven in the most inclement season of a Newfoundland winter, to seek refuge, on board the shipping in the harbor, and failing that, to find shelter where they could. But the misery of the unfortunate people, rendered more acute by the brief season of high prosperity which they had enjoyed during the war had not reached its climax. On the seventh of November in the following year, another calamitous fire broke out in St Johns, by which thirteen merchant establishments were totally consumed. The value of the property thus destroyed was estimated at £500,000, and on the 21st of the same month 56 of the remaining houses were burnt to the ground. In 1847, the town was again destroyed by fire. Harbor Grace is the second town of importance having a population of about 6,000 souls. It is also the seat of a Roman Catholic Bishopric, is very flourishing, has wide streets and a number of fine buildings. It is situated in Conception Bay, about 60 miles from St. Johns by land. There are a number of smaller towns and villages, but time will not permit of my particularizing them. The population of the whole island according to the census of 1869 amounted to 146,526, classified as follows: Roman Catholics, 61,040; Church of England, 55,184; Wesleyan,

28,990 ; other sects 1,322. Newfoundland has never been considered by outsiders an agricultural country, but we will see what a former governor, the late Sir Gaspard Le-Marchant says about it. In his report to Earl Gray in 1848, he shows that Newfoundland has not the inhospitable climate and barren soil which has long been supposed peculiar to the place ; he says : "At present it will be scarcely considered necessary to adduce arguments or proofs, as to the capability of the soil of Newfoundland for agricultural purposes ; as a general principle it may be safely laid down that in no case where due skill and industry have been employed, have they failed to repay the husbandman's toil. Farms have been successfully cultivated in the districts of St. John's, Trinity, Bonavista, St. Mary's, Conception Bay, Placentia, Burin and Fortune Bay. And in every part of the Island, wheat, oats, barley, potatoes and turnips have been produced of the best quality. It may be said without fear of contradiction, that in no instance where industry and skill have been used in clearing and cultivating the soil of Newfoundland, has it failed to make an ample recompense. But the Newfoundlanders are so engaged in the fisheries that they neglect this most important branch of industry and in consequence have to import most of their breadstuffs from Canada and the United States, and their vegetables from Edward Island and Cape Breton, from whence also comes their supply of cattle, sheep and horses. The climate is different in the Northern and Southern districts and the West coast is more sheltered and therefore milder than the the East coast. The weather though severe is less fierce than that of Canada, the Autumn certain, and the winter a series of storms of wind, rain and snow. Snow does not lie long on the ground, and the frost is less intense than in Western Canada. Winter lasts from the beginning of December until the middle of April. January and February are the coldest months in the year. Severe gales of wind extend

along the coast, the coldest from the North-West. The land or westerly wind are naturally drier than the Easterly, which sweep over the Atlantic for three fourths of the year, and cause considerable evaporation from the ocean over the banks. In Newfoundland as in Canada, the land or Westerly wind in winter is bitterly cold, in summer it is pleasantly warm. During a long winter the brilliancy of the Aurora Borealis and the splendid lustre of the moon and stars give peculiar beauty to the atmosphere. The most remarkable feature connected with Newfoundland is the fogs on its banks and neighboring shores. The fogs of the St. Lawrence are attributed to the coldness of the Gulf waters, which is believed to be constant a few feet below the surface as well as at great depths; every gale of wind brings this cold water to the surface, by which the temperature of the air is reduced below the dew point, at which suspended vapors are precipitated and become visible. Those on the banks of Newfoundland are most probably caused by the cold deep water flowing from the Pole to the Equator, being forced to the surface in consequence of the interruption given by the banks to its southward course. The surface water on the great banks is many degrees colder than that of the neighboring sea, and much less so than that of the Gulf stream, which is within a short distance. The water of Trinity Bay has been described as "bitterly cold" even in the middle of a warm July, and so singularly clear, that when the surface was still, the shellfish clinging to the rocks, crabs and lobsters crawling on the bottom, fish and myriads of sea creatures floating in its depths, were nearly as visible to a depth of 30 or 40 feet, as in the air itself. The fogs on the banks and even in the Gulf, are sometimes so dense, that in fine almost calm weather, with the sun shining over head, two vessels pass each other unseen, while the voices of persons talking can be heard from either ship. The fog appears to be on the surface of the water, for when near land, an

observer from the masthead may descry it quite distinctly, while on deck no object within a few yards distance is visible. In May and the beginning of June, fogs are most prevalent. These fogs do not appear to be injurious to health. The longevity of the inhabitants is indeed the best proof of the salubrity of Newfoundland, in no country is old age attended with greater bodily vigor and mental animation. There are instances of fishermen 100 years of age, being actively engaged in the arduous duties of their calling. In 1829, Martin Galten was living in Placentia Bay; he was more than 100 years old, in excellent health, and caught with his brother that year nine quintals of fish. Seventy years previously he had piloted Captain Cook into Placentia Bay. In the same place lived Nancy Libeau, mother of four living generations. A Mrs. Tait died there in 1819, aged 125; she was with her third husband at the siege of Quebec by general Wolfe. In 1842 a woman died at Torbay aged 125, and before her death she sent for a doctor to see what was the matter with her child, the said child being then 90 years of age. I merely mention these facts to prove the salubrity of the Island. The vegetable productions differ but little from those of the adjacent continent. Some of the timber in the interior is of considerable size, and consists of the balsam, spruce, black spruce, white spruce, black larch, red pine, birch, mountain ash, and the Lombardy poplar. Birch and elm trees are scarce, but the Canadian yew and willow thrive well and attain a large size. There is an immense variety of recumbent and trailing evergreens, and the berry-bearing shrubs clothe every swamp and open tract, the whortleberry, cowberry, hawthorn, partridgeberry, strawberry, raspberry, and a small kind of prickly gooseberry,—carpet the soil in desert places. Wild currants, both black, white and red are plentiful, but the flavor is rather harsh in comparison with the domestic fruit. The apple, pear and plum do not arrive at great perfection on the east side of

the island, but cabbages, cauliflowers, brocoli, lettuce, spinach, cress, beet, parsnips, beans, celery, thrive well, but are not grown in large quantities. Roses are to be found in great variety, also violets, but strange to say inodorous. In the tribe of lilies, Sir R. Bonnycastle remarks that Solomon in all his glory exceeded not the beauty of those produced in this unheeded wilderness. Perennials thrive better than annuals, on accounts of the shortness of summer. The Pitcher Plant or lady's saddle with its large handsome purple flowers, is the natural production of the swamps. The leaves are tubular or pitcher shaped, and always filled with about a wine glass full of the purest water; the receptacles are lined with inverted hairs, which prevent the escape of insects, many of whom find their graves in the pitcher and are supposed to serve for the food of the plant. The leaves expand and shut according to the necessities of the plant, and the pitchers are of so strong a texture that they bear heat enough for some minutes to boil water in them. The animal kingdom is represented by the deer, wolf, wild cat, fox, hare, martin and dog. Birds are numerous in the interior, among which I may mention the hawk tribe, owls in amazing numbers and variety, particularly the snow white and light grey; the raven, crow, blue jay, two kinds of woodpeckers, black bird, martin, the yellow willow wren, thrush, sparrow, with various other species of the winged tribes. Ptarmigan are in abundance; and are easily captured in winter, a pole with a piece of wire at the end being the only weapon required. By means of this instrument the birds are pulled off their perches, and easily taken. Of water birds there are the Canada and snow goose, teal, brown duck, widgeon; these frequent the interior ponds. Of sea birds I may mention among others, the gull, cormorant, eider duck, sea pheasant, ice bird, noddy, loon, puffin and razor bill. In winter many Arctic birds frequent the coast. It is a strange fact but nevertheless true, that there is a total

absence of venomous reptiles in Newfoundland ; even toads frogs and lizards which are abundant on the neighboring continent, are unknown. The seal abounds around the island, and are taken on the ice in thousands. The cries of the young seal, are like those of a child in extreme agony, and are sometimes between a shriek and a convulsive sobbing. These cries seem to be the amusement of the young seals, when left alone on the ice ; and the same cry is used to express enjoyment or pain, fear or defiance. The young seal is of a dirty white color. The common seal is of a yellowish grey or brown, with yellow spots, become white from age, and is from three to five feet long. The hooded seal is of a dark grey color with many irregular shaped spots and blotches of considerable size, seven or eight feet long, with a piece of loose skin on its head, which can be inflated and drawn over the eyes, and is nearly ball proof. It has the power of distending its nostrils, which gives it a formidable appearance. The harp seal is so named from the old male animal having, in addition to a number of spots, a broad curved line of connecting blotches proceeding from each shoulder, and meeting on the back above the tail, something like an ancient lyre. The female has not the harp ; she leaves her young on the ice, and returns from fishing to nurse them. The fishing or catching of seals is an extremely hazardous employment ; the vessels are chiefly from 100 to 300 tons burden, with crews of from 30 to 80 men each, provided with fire arms &c. to kill the seal. In former times none but sailing vessels were employed in sealing, but steamships have almost entirely taken their place, and instead of trips of 1,000 to 6,000 seals being taken, 10,000 to 35,000 are frequently brought in. These seals are worth at St. Johns on an average of three dollars, so that it is a mine of wealth to the Island. In the beginning of March, the vessels leave on their voyage and work their perilous way to windward of the vast fields of ice, until they arrive at one covered with the animals of

which they are in quest, and which is termed a seal meadow. The seals are attacked by the fishermen, or more properly speaking hunters, with fire-arms, or generally short heavy *bâtons*, a blow of which on the nose is instantly fatal. The hooded seals sometimes draw their hoods, which are shot-proof, over their heads. The large ones frequently turn on the men, especially when they have young ones beside them, and the piteous cries and moans of the latter are truly distressing to those who are not accustomed to the immense slaughter, which is attended with so great profit. The skins with the fat surrounding the bodies, are stripped off altogether, and the carcasses left on the ice. Those who winter on the coast of Labrador say that the young seal is excellent eating, but I can vouch myself for the quality of the flippers, having frequently partaken of them. The pelts are carried to the vessels, whose situation during a tempest is attended with fearful danger; many have been known to be crushed to pieces by the ice closing on them. Storms during the dark nights among vast icebergs can only be imagined by a person who has been on a lee shore in a gale of wind; but the hardy seal hunter seems to court such hazardous adventures. The whale, porpoise and grampus abound. The banks of Newfoundland swarm with almost every variety of the finny tribe, of which the smaller sorts serve as food for the cod. The incredible shoals of lance, a small silvery eel-like creature, the armies of migratory herrings, the hosts of capelin, which are met with in their several seasons, cause the sea to boil and glitter in their rapid paths, producing the effect of currents, upon the bosom of the tranquil deep. The locusts that darken the air, in the countries subject to their devastation, are not to be compared in numbers to the periodical journeyers of the Newfoundland seas. The capelin is from three to seven inches long, with a slight elegantly shaped body, and when seen in the sunlight, glitters like silver. This beautiful little fish, in June and

early in July, crowds into the shores of Newfoundland in countless myriads to spawn. Wherever there is a strip of beach at the head of a bay, every rolling wave strews the sand with thousands of capelin, leaping and glancing in the sun, till the next wave sweeps them off and deposits a fresh multitude, the white foam and the glittering colors of the fish, form a beautiful sight. Mr. Anspach who resided in Conception Bay, thus describes the arrival of a capelin shoal, " It is impossible to conceive much more describe, the splendid appearance on a beautiful moonlight night, at this time. Then its vast surface is completely covered with myriads of fishes, of various kinds and sizes, all actively engaged in pursuing or avoiding each other, the whales alternately rising and plunging, throwing into the air spouts of water ; the codfish bounding above the waves, and reflecting the light of the moon from their silvery surface ; the capelin, hurrying away in immense shoals, to seek a refuge on the shore, where each retiring wave leaves multitudes skipping upon the sand, an easy prey to the women and children, who stand there with barrows and buckets ready to seize upon the precious and plentiful booty ; whilst the fishermen, in their skiffs, with nets made for that purpose, are industriously employed in securing a sufficient quantity of this valuable bait for their fishery. " There are several varieties of codfish on the Newfoundland shores, but the seyfish of Norway is the best eating, and sometimes weighs from 20 to 30 lbs. These are taken sometimes in nets, at other times caught with hook and line, the bait either being capelin or squid, the latter a cuttle fish. Sometimes when food is so abundant the codfish will not bite ; they are then taken with a jigger or plummet of lead, armed with hooks, and drawn quickly up and down in the water, by which the codfish is attracted and struck with the hook as he swims round the jigger, this mode is deemed objectionable as more fish are wounded than caught. The cod constitutes the wealth of

the island, notwithstanding the myriads which have been taken during the last two centuries, it seems as abundant as when the banks were first visited. Salmon fishing is followed during the summer by several families; the herring fishery is increasing, and the capelin is used for the food of man as well as for bait for the cod: of 22 kinds of mackerel known only one frequents the Arctic regions. The yellow mackerel, which abounds in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence is supposed to cross the Atlantic from the African coast. Herrings appear in vast quantities, but the best are taken on the coast of Labrador. The lakes and rivers in the interior contain excellent fish, so that the inhabitants possess at least abundance of this description of food. It has been stated that the fisheries of Newfoundland are to England more precious than the mines of Peru or Mexico; and in truth, if we consider the vast quantities of fish annually drawn from the banks and adjacent coasts, it will be found that as the mere representative value of gold, their worth far exceeds that of the precious metals, to say nothing of the importance of the subject in a maritime, commercial and political point of view. With regard to the minerals of the island, I may mention coal abounds in large quantities. The coal fields are evidently a continuation of the coal strata in Nova Scotia, Cape Breton and New Brunswick. At eight miles from the Gulf shore a bed of coal known to the Micmac Indians, was seen, of three feet in thickness and of excellent quality. The extent of the coal field is estimated at 25 miles long by 10 broad. As population increases in the island these mines will be found of great value, and tend much to its improvement. These mines have never been worked and coals are imported chiefly from England, Scotland and Cape Breton. Copper, Lead and Gypsum are found in paying quantities, and within a few years, an enormous amount of lead and copper ore has been shipped to the United King-

dom. The Hon. C. F. Bennett, the pioneer (I may say) of mines has, I am informed realized a large fortune in mining, having persevered for a number of years, encountering untold difficulties. Up to the year 1832, the Government of Newfoundland had been administered by Naval Officers, but in that year a constitution was given to the colony, Sir Thomas Cochrane the then Governor, being authorized to form a legislative body, to consist of himself a Legislature and Executive Council of seven members, of his own choice and fifteen representatives to be chosen by the inhabitants of nine districts into which the Island was to be divided, to form a House of Assembly. In 1833, the first Local Parliament was opened ; and in 1834, Sir Thos. Cochrane was relieved by a successor, Captain Prescott the last of the Naval Governors of the Island, whose administration ceased in 1840. In 1852, the inhabitants began to clamor for Responsible Government, but it was not granted them until 1854, when a communication was received from the Home Office stating that " Her Majesty's Government had come to the conclusion that they ought not to withhold from Newfoundland these institutions and that civil administration which under the popular name of Responsible Government had been adopted in all Her Majesty's neighboring possessions in North America ; and that they were prepared to concede the immediate application of the system as soon as certain preliminary conditions had been acceded to on the part of the Legislature." The press of Newfoundland is well represented, issuing as it does some half dozen daily, tri-weekly and weekly newspapers. The first published was the Royal Gazette, which I believe is still in existence. It first appeared in the year 1806. These papers are conducted with a variety of talent ; they severally represent all interests and classes, all political opinions, and all the varieties of religious faith and feeling ; and whether for good or evil, they exert considerable influence on the minds and actions of society.

Having given you a very brief description of this Island, comparatively so little known, I shall conclude in the words of Montgomery Martin, by saying that "Newfoundland with its commanding position, fine harbours and salubrious climate was tabooed (for a time) as a barren and inhospitable island, totally unfit for the habitation of man, and capable only of maintaining a few fishery establishments. These misapprehensions are now passing away, the truth unwarped by prejudice, unvarnished by exaggeration, is gradually becoming understood, and the results of an improved and improving system of legislation are shown in the progress of this ancient and truly British colony."



BENARES,

THE SACRED CITY OF THE HINDUS.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

IN the year 1866, there arrived in Quebec, on a visit to myself, one who had spent some twenty-five years in India, but more especially in the City of Benares. I refer to the Rev. M. A. Sherring, L.L.B., who had been sent from England, by the London Missionary Society, to preach the Gospel in that land. I have no doubt he will be remembered by many here, having delivered one or two exceedingly interesting lectures on India, before the Literary and Historical Society of this city. I was so much interested in his history and description of Benares the Holy City of the Hindus, that I was convinced it would be equally interesting to such as I see gathered here from time to time. The early history of Benares is involved in much obscurity. It is, indisputably, a place of great antiquity, and may even date from the time when the Aryan race first spread itself over Northern India. Although such a supposition is incapable of direct proof, yet the sacred city must, undoubtedly, be reckoned amongst the primitive cities, founded by this people. When it was first built, and by what prince or patriarch, is altogether unknown. But of its great antiquity, stretching back through the dim ages of early Indian history, far into the clouds and mists of Vedic and pre-historical periods, there is no question. It is certain that the city is regarded by all Hindus, as coeval with the birth of Hinduism, a notion derived both from tradition and from their own writings. Allusions

to Benares are exceedingly abundant in ancient Sanskrit literature ; and perhaps there is no city in all Hindustan more frequently referred to. For the sanctity of its inhabitants—of its temples and reservoirs—of its wells and streams—of the very soil that is trodden—of the very air that is breathed—and of every thing in it and around it, Benares has been famed for thousands of years. The Hindu ever beholds the city in one peculiar aspect, as a place of spotless holiness and heavenly beauty, where the spiritual eye may be delighted and the heart may be purified ; and his imagination has been kept fervid from generation to generation, by the continued presentation of this glowing picture. Believing all he has read and heard concerning this ideal seat of blessedness, he has been possessed with the same longing to visit it as the Mohammedan to visit Mecca, or the Christian enthusiast to visit Jerusalem ; and having gratified his desire, has left the memory of his pious enterprise to his children, for their example, to incite them to undertake the same pilgrimage, faithfully transmitting to them the high ambition which he himself received from his fathers. Benares is a city of no mean antiquity. Twenty-five centuries ago, at the least, it was famous. When Babylon was struggling with Nineveh for supremacy, when Tyre was planting her colonies, when Athens was growing in strength, before Rome had become known, or Greece had contended with Persia, or Cyrus had added lustre to the Persian Monarchy, or Nebuchadnezzar had captured Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of Judea had been carried into captivity, she had already risen to greatness, if not to glory. Nay, she may have heard of the fame of Solomon, and have sent her ivory, her apes, and her peacocks to adorn his palaces ; while partly with her gold he may have overlaid the Temple of the Lord. Not only is Benares remarkable for her venerable age, but also for the vitality and vigour which, so far as we know, she has constantly exhibited, while many cities and nations

have fallen into decay and perished, her sun has never set; on the contrary, for long ages past, it has shone with almost meridian splendour. Her illustrious name has descended from generation to generation, and has ever been a household word, venerated and beloved by the vast Hindu family. Mr. Sherring says: "Notwithstanding her destruction by fire, applied by the hand of Krishna, which may or may not be true, and the manifestations, in her physical aspects, of repeated changes, shifting of site, and resuscitations, yet, as a city, no signs of feebleness, nor symptom of impending dissolution, so far as I am aware of, is apparent in any of the numberless references to her in native records. As a queen, she has ever received the willing homage of her subjects scattered over all India; as a lover, she has secured their affection and regard. And now, after the lapse of so many ages, this magnificent city still maintains most of the freshness and all the beauty of her early youth." For picturesqueness and grandeur, no sight in all the world can surpass that of Benares, as seen from the river Ganges. Macauley's graphic description of her appearance towards the close of the last century is, for the most part, applicable to her present state. He speaks of her as a city, which in wealth, population, dignity, and sanctity, was among the foremost of Asia. It was commonly believed that half a million of human beings was crowded into that labyrinth of lofty alleys, rich with shrines, and minarets, and balconies, and carved oriels, to which the sacred apes clung by hundreds. The traveller could scarcely make his way through the press of holy mendicants, and not less holy bulls. The broad and stately flights of steps which descended from these swarming haunts to the bathing places along the Ganges, were worn every day by the footsteps of an innumerable multitude of worshippers. The schools and temples drew crowds of pious Hindus from every province where the Brahminical faith was known. Hundreds of devotees came thither

every month to die, for it was believed that a happy fate awaited the man who should pass from the sacred city into the sacred river. Nor was superstition the only motive which allured strangers to that great metropolis. Commerce had as many pilgrims as religion. All along the shores of the venerable stream lay great fleets of vessels, laden with rich merchandize. From the looms of Benares went forth the most delicate silks that adorned the halls of St. James and of Versailles; and in the bazaars, the muslins of Bengal, and the sabres of Oude were mingled with the jewels of Golconda and the shawls of Cashmere. The district of Benares is situate on both sides of the river Ganges, in the territory denominated the north west province of Bengal. It lies between Latitude $25^{\circ} 7''$ and $25^{\circ} 32''$ Longitude $82^{\circ} 45''$ and $83^{\circ} 38''$, and has an area of 974 square miles. The principal products of the district are sugar, opium and indigo. According to the census of 1848 the population amounted to 741,426, of whom 676,000 were Hindus and 65,376 Musselmans. The City of Benares is in the province of Allahabad. The Ganges here forms a fine sweep of about four miles in length, and the city is situated on the northern bank of the river. It is about three miles in length by one in breadth, rising from the river in the form of an amphitheatre and is thickly studied with domes and minarets. The bank of the river is entirely lined with stone, in which are many fine ghats or landing places, built by pious devotees of large stones to the height of thirty feet, before they reach the level of the street, and highly ornamented. They are generally crowded with bathers and worshippers. Shrines and temples even within the limits of the river's rise, almost line its banks. The streets of this great city are so winding and narrow that there is not room for a wheel-carriage to pass; and it is difficult to penetrate even on horse-back. The streets are much lower than the ground floors of the houses, which have mostly arched rows in front, with little shops

behind them; and above these they are richly embellished with verandahs, galleries, projecting oriel windows, and very broad overhanging eaves, supported by carved brackets. The houses are built of very good stone from Chunar, and are mostly lofty, none being less than two stories in height, most of them three, and several five or six stories, close to each other, with terraces on the summit, and extremely small windows, for the sake alike of coolness and of privacy. The Hindus are fond of painting the outside of their houses of a deep red color, and of covering the most conspicuous parts with paintings, in gaudy colors, of flower pots, men, women, bulls, elephants, gods and goddesses, in all the forms of Hindu mythology. The number of temples is very great; they are mostly small and stuck in the angles of the streets and under the shadow of the lofty houses. Their form are not ungraceful and many of them are covered over with beautiful and elaborate carvings of flowers, animals and palm branches, rivaling in richness and minuteness the finest specimens of Gothic or of Grecian architecture. The mosque which was built by Anrunglebe on the site of a Hindu temple, and in order to mortify the Hindus, is a handsome building, placed on the highest and most conspicuous point of land, and close to the river. Its minarets are very lofty, and command an extensive view of the town and adjacent country, and of the numerous Hindu Temples scattered over the city and surrounding plains. The Sanskrit college instituted in 1792, is a large building divided into two courts, with galleries above and below. An English department has been attached to this college. In 1850, the number of pupils amounted to 240; of whom six were native Christians, sixteen Mahometans, and 218 Hindus. The course of instruction embraces, Sanskrit, Persian, Hindu law and general literature. In this city, a new government college has been recently established in which the whole range of European litera-

ture and science is thrown open to the native student. Benares having from time immemorial been a holy city, contains a vast number of Brahmins, who either subsist by charitable contributions or are supported by endowments in the numerous religious institutions of the city. These establishments are adorned with idols, and send out an unceasing noise from all sorts of discordant instruments ; while religious medicants from the numerous sects, with every conceivable deformity, "which chalk, cow-dung, disease, matted locks, distorted limbs, and disgusting and hideous attitudes of penance can show, literally line the principal streets on both sides," Some are seen with their legs or arms distorted by long continuance in one position, others with their hands clenched until the finger nails have pierced entirely through the hand. A stranger as he passes through the streets, is saluted with the most pitiful exclamations from these swarms of beggars. But beside this immense resort to Benares of poor pilgrims from every part of India as well as from Thibet and the Burman Empire, numerous rich individuals in the decline of life, and almost all the great men who are disgraced or banished from home by the political revolutions, which have been of late years so frequent among the Hindu states, repair to this holy city to wash away their sins in the sacred waters of the Ganges, or to fill up their time with the gaudy ceremonies of their religion. All these devotees give away large sums in indiscriminate charity, some of them to the amount of £8,000 or £9,000 sterling ; and it is the hope of sharing in those pious distributions that brings together from all quarters, such a concourse of religious mendicants. Bulls are reckoned sacred by the Hindus, and being tame and familiar, they walk lazily up and down the streets, or are seen lying across them, interrupting the passage, and are hardly to be roused, as, in compliance with the prejudices of the frantic population, they must be treated in the gentlest manner. Upwards of thirty years ago Mr.

James Prinsep, then stationed at Benares, took a census of the city, and also made a computation of the number of temples and mosques existing in it. From his calculation, which was made with considerable care, there were, at that time, in the city proper, exclusive of the suburbs, 1,000 Hindu temples and 333 Mahomedan mosques. But this number of temples, which has since been much increased, did not include the small shrines. These shrines if they be worthy of this designation, each occupied by one or more Idols, are in some parts of the city, exceedingly numerous. Figures of all forms, from a plain stone to the most fantastic shape, whole and mutilated, painted and unpainted, some without adornment, others decorated with garlands, or wet with sacred water, meet the eye in every direction. But the abundance of idols and fanes all over the city give it a strange and repellant appearance. By a more recent estimate than that made by Mr. Prinsep, the following results have been arrived at: number of temples in the seven districts of the city, 1,454; mosques, 272. In regard to the number of idols of every description actually worshipped by the people, it certainly exceeds the number of people themselves, though multiplied twice over; it cannot be less than half a million, and may be many more. Indeed, the love of idolatry is so deep-seated and intense in the breast of the Hindu, that it is a common thing for both men and women to amuse themselves, with a pious intent, with manufacturing little gods from mud and clay, and, after paying divine honors to them, and that, too, with the same profound reverence which they display in their devotions before the well known deities of the temples, to throw them away. Mr. Sherring relates a remarkable instance of this. He says: "One day on entering the court yard of the temple of the goddess of plenty, my attention was arrested by an aged woman seated on the ground in front of a small clay figure, which, I ascertained, she had, with her own hands, manufactured

that morning, and to which she was solemnly paying homage. Close by was a brazen vessel containing water, into which every now and then she dipped a small spoon, and then gently poured a few drops upon the head of the image. She then reverently folded her hands, and muttered words of prayer, occasionally moving one hand to her face, and with finger and thumb compressing her two nostrils, in order that, holding her breath as far as possible, she might increase the merit of her worship and the efficacy of her prayer. I did not stay to the end; yet I well know the result, as the same thing is constantly done in Benares. Having completed her devotions, she rose, took the image which she had worshiped, in her hands, and threw it away, as of no further use." Benares, like Athens in the time of St. Paul, is a city "wholly given to idolatry." The Hindu, it should always be remembered, is, in his own fashion, a religious man of very great earnestness; but his religion takes the form of idolatry. Idolatry enters into all the associations and concerns of his life. He can take no step without it. He carries his offerings publicly in the streets, on his way to the temple in the morning, and receives upon his forehead, from the officiating priest, the peculiar mark of his god, as the symbol of the worship he has paid him, which he wears all the day long. As he walks about you may hear him muttering the names and sounding the praises of his gods. In meeting a friend he accosts him in the name of a deity. In a letter on business, or on any other matter, the first word he invariably writes is the name of a god. Should he propose an engagement of importance, he first enquires the pleasure of the idol, and a lucky day for observing it. At his birth his horoscope is cast; when he is ill, the gods must be propitiated; when he is bereaved, the idol must be remembered; at his death, his funeral rites are performed in the name of one or more deities. In short, idolatry is a charm, a fascination, to the Hindu. It is, so to speak, the air he breathes.

It is the food of his soul. It is the foundation of his hopes, both for this world and for another. He is subdued, enslaved, and befooled by it. He is, however, a willing slave—a willing devotee; for he loves idolatry, together with its superstitious and ceremonies, with all the ardor of religious frenzy. Moreover, it is of great importance to bear in mind, that, as a man can hardly be better than his religion, the nature of the Hindu partakes of the supposed nature of the gods whom he worships. And what is that nature? According to the traditions handed about amongst the natives, and constantly dwelt upon in their conversation, and referred to in their popular songs, which, perhaps, would be sufficient proof for our purpose, yet, more especially, according to the numberless statements and narratives found in their sacred writings, on which these traditions are based, it is, in many instances, vile and abominable to the last degree; so that the poor idolator, when brought completely under its influence, is most deplorably debased. Virtue, truth, holiness, civilization, enlightenment, human progress, all that contributes to individual happiness and to a nation's prosperity, cannot be properly appreciated by him. His soul's best affections are blighted, and his conscience is deeply perverted. Idolatry is a word denoting all that is wicked in imagination and impure in practice. These remarks are especially true of rigid and thorough Hindus, like the Ganga putras or "sons of the Ganges," who may be regarded as representing, in their own persons, the complete results of their strange religion. To speak plainly, and yet without extravagance, the moral nature of such Hindus has become so distorted, that to a large extent they have forgotten the essential distinctness of things. Their idol worship has plunged them into immoralities of the grossest forms, has robbed them of truth, has filled their minds with deceit, has vitiated their holy aspirations, has greatly enfeebled every sentiment of virtue, has corrupted the common feelings of humanity within

them, has disfigured and well nigh destroyed the true notion of God, which all men in some shape are believed to possess, has degraded them to the lowest depths, and has rendered them unfit alike for this world and for the next. Idolatry is a demon—an incarnation of all evil—but, nevertheless, as bewitching and seductive as a Siren. It ensnares the depraved heart, coils around it like a serpent, transfixes it with its deadly fangs and finally stings it to death. Idolatry has, for many centuries, drunk the life-blood of the Hindu with insatiate thirst, has covered with its pollutions the fair and fertile soil of India, has drenched the land with its poisoned waters, and has rendered its inhabitants as godless as it was possible for them to become. But to return to the city of Benares, and its temples. Benares, in spite of all its wretchedness and fanaticism, is a splendid, wealthy and commercial city, the bazaars are filled with the richest goods and there is a constant bustle of business in all the principal streets. It is a great commercial emporium for the shawls of the north, the diamonds of the south, and the muslins of Dacca, and the eastern provinces; and it has considerable manufactures of silk, cotton, and fine wool, as well as of gold and silver lace; while English hardware, swords, shields, and and spears from Lucknow, and the finer manufactures of Europe, are imported to Gorrickpoor, Nepaul, and other tracts removed from the main channel of communication by the Ganges. The population of the city and suburbs, exclusive of the military cantonment, is returned at 183,491, of which number 147,082 are Hindus, and 36,400 Mahomedans; and during religious festivals the concourse of people from all parts is immense. Yet the city, notwithstanding its crowded population and narrow streets, is not unhealthy; which is probably owing to its dry situation on a high rocky bank, sloping towards the river, and to the frequent ablutions and temperate habits of the people. There are but few Europeans in Benares, a Judge, Collector, Regis-

trar, with a few other civil servants, constitute the whole of the Company's establishment; to which may be added a few private merchants and planters. The residence of the English judge and civil establishment is at Secrole, a pleasant village about two miles from the city, where there is a military cantonment for a batallion of Sepoys. The ancient and modern buildings of Benares and its neighborhood, were constructed by a living, earnest people who have, for the most part, passed away, but have left their remains behind them, illustrative of their power and skill, of their greatness and glory. By examining these buildings, we gain some knowledge of the people who erected them; and this is the main object we should have in view. Undoubtedly, there is a subtle mysterious pleasure awakened in the breast by the contemplation of an old ruin; but it owes all its force to the fact that the old ruin is associated with human existence in a by gone age, with the forefathers of the present race inhabiting the earth. These sentiments, again, are modified in proportion to the extent of our knowledge of the past. For instance, if we are able to accumulate data sufficient to compare one epoch with another, we are conscious of experiencing pleasure or pain, in proportion as we find humanity progressing or degenerating. There are few sentiments more elevating to the soul than those which spring from the study of a nation, which has carried on a long and desperate struggle with great systems of error and moral corruption, and has come out of the conflict triumphant, with clearer preceptions of truth and purer notions of virtue. On the other hand, there is no sentiment more depressing than that which is produced by the study of a people who have declined from bad to worse; from one abomination to another; from one system of evil to others more and more opposed to truth, to reason, and to God. Now, in regard to the history of Benares, I cannot say that many pleasurable feelings have been engendered in my mind,

as I have pondered over it. Its history is, to a great extent, the history of India; and, therefore, it is hardly fair to isolate the city from the country, and to pass judgment on it alone. Speaking, then of this great city as representative of an immense empire, one is bound to say, that, while its career has been of long duration, it has not been of a character to awaken much of enthusiasm or admiration. It cannot be said that either the moral, or the social or even the intellectual condition of the people residing here is a whit better than it was upwards of two thousand years ago. One fails to trace, throughout this vast period, any advance in those higher principles of human action, the practice of which alone makes a nation truly illustrious and great. On the contrary, the revelations of the past, brief and scattered though they be, are found to establish the fact beyond all dispute, that at least in one distinct epoch of Hindu History, more respect was paid to truth, honesty, and virtue, than is generally shown by the present inhabitants of India. Now just as we do not admire a man who happens to be a hundred years old, unless we know that he has lived a life of integrity and uprightness, and has increased in his wisdom and probity with his years, so we must withhold our admiration from a city or nation which, from a combination of certain peculiar circumstances, has drawn out an existence of wondrous length, but, in respect of its virtues and moral excellences, in respect of those higher qualities which mainly distinguish man from the brute, and by the possession of which he becomes, in a measure, assimilated to his Creator, has, for many ages, been in an unprogressive and stagnant condition. Such a nation or city may possess fine buildings, fine temples, fine ghats, and fine tanks, as Benares has done for thousands of years; but its material splendour will augment the prevailing gloom, just as the stars of heaven give intensity to the darkness of night. These remarks are intimately connected with the object of this

paper, which has reference not only to the physical and external circumstances of Benares, but also to its highest moral relations. While I look with profound regret on much of the past history of India, I look forward to its coming history with strong hopes and confidence. The sacred principles of progress, which have raised the western nations of the world to that high position of civilization and greatness which at present they occupy, have already reached India, and begun to operate upon its inhabitants. The great changes manifestly taking place in the material and social condition of the people of India, are more than equalled by the changes wrought in religious sentiments and habits. What the telegraph and railroads, and canals, and bridges, and metalled roads are accomplishing, physically, in opening up the country, and developing its immense resources, christianity and education are effecting, intellectually, in uprooting error and superstition, in imparting right notions respecting virtue and religion, and in elevating the people generally. The most conspicuous and decided illustration of this is undoubtedly visible in some parts of Bengal, particularly in Calcutta, and other cities and towns in which the society called the Brahmo Samaj exists. This society now numbers several thousands of adherents, who are, for the most part, men of education and intelligence, and is, next to christianity, the most formidable assailant of idolatry in India. It is, also, professedly a stout opponent of caste; but, in practice, its members are not so much released from its bondage as from that of idolatry; nor are they such unequivocal adversaries to its authority as to the authority of the numerous gods of the land. In Benares and its neighborhood, Bengalis or *natives of Bengal* exert but little influence, except upon their fellow-countrymen of Bengal residing there; for they are regarded, by the Hindustani population, as foreigners, although holding the same religion; and their sentiments and projects are looked upon

with suspicion. But even here the Brahmo Samaj has a branch society, which is slowly exerting an influence similar to that which the parent society exercises. Such an influence, wherever it exists, although not all that christians desire, yet, so far as it goes, is, to a large extent salutary. It is mixed up with error, but nevertheless, contains many noble principles, the operation of which upon the hearts and consciences of the natives cannot fail to raise them far above the degraded social and spiritual condition in which, for ages, they have remained. Better, far better, that all India should attach itself to the Brahmo Samaj than its inhabitants should blindly persist in the worship of Siva, and Krishna, and Ram, and should continue benighted by the fatal errors which such worship sanctions. While it is a fact, that Hinduism is still kept up by the people generally in the temples at the sacred wells and tanks, on the ghats, and in the holy streams, with enthusiasm, yet it is, I believe, indisputable, that there are thousands of persons, in this city alone, who are not satisfied with their rites and devotions ; and, although, for the sake of appearance, they do as others do, they have no faith in idolatry. Furthermore, there are some who have entirely abandoned it, except under certain circumstances, when the necessity of their position has got the better of their convictions, and who, nevertheless, have not outwardly embraced a better creed, nor have any immediate intention of doing so. This is an age of temple building, in Benares and in all this part of India, such as has not been known, perhaps since the period preceding the Mahomedan rule and succeeding the decline and extinction of Buddhism in India ; and yet, it is an age of uneasiness, anxiety, and alarm, amongst all ranks of rigid Hindus. These latter know well that they are erecting temples in vain, and that while they are contributing to the outward splendor of their religion, its inner life is being gradually undermined and destroyed ; for the thought constantly

rises up in their minds, that their sons are a different race from themselves, with new and enlarged ideas, and distinctive of those which they and their forefathers long cherished. The ground, they feel, is slipping from under them; and there is a dim prevision of consciousness in their breasts, that, one day, their temples will be forsaken, and that the huge structure of their religion will fall with a crash. These remarks are especially true with regard to the youths brought up in the government and mission colleges and schools. These institutions are yearly sending forth a large number of young men, well trained and well educated, who understand our English books, speak and write our language, take delight in European literature and civilization, and are generally, more or less, acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures. During their course of study, they have reflected upon the facts of history, of science, and of the christian religion, that have been brought before their attention; and they have, almost involuntarily, been led to compare them with the dogmas of their own religion, and with the practices which it either permits or enjoins. The consequence of this course of instruction and reflection is, that, after spending several years as students, when they come to go forth to the business of the world, they find themselves very different, in thought and belief, from their friends and parents at home. A few of them, as shown before, of more courage than the rest, honestly avow their disbelief in idolatry and belief in christianity, and in spite of all opposition, cast their lot with the small but continually increasing body of native christians. Others—but how large a class I cannot say—abandon their idols, yet do not become christians. Others, again—a considerable number, I believe—worship idols reluctantly, from feelings of respect to their relations and acquaintances, and, if possible, solely on public occasions and at festivals. They are not yet ready to sacrifice property, position, family, and friends, for what they have been brought to feel is the

truth. Although, in the actual prosecution of missionary labor, not only in Benares, but also in other places in India, there are many difficulties and discouragements to encounter, both in the opposition of idolaters, and in the not unfrequent inconsistency of native christians, yet the results are most extensive and extraordinary. Considering the small amount of money which has been expended, the limited means which have been employed, and the brief space of time which has elapsed since the missionary enterprise was inaugurated in the sacred city, and bearing in mind, likewise, the stern fact that christianity has there met with the fiercest and most determined opponents, that it is the great seat of caste prejudice and priestly domination, that it is the chief and acknowledged bulwark of idolatry and superstition in all India, and that, in short, Hinduism has there sat enthroned in the midst of pomp and power, sustained by the learning and subtlety of the Brahmans, and by the wealth and authority of rajas and princes, from all parts of the country, for a period stretching over many ages, it is most surprising that so much has been achieved. India is undergoing an intellectual and also a moral and religious revolution. The past is slowly losing its bewitching influence over the public mind. The Hindu dares to think, and has ever dared—though he lacks the courage to act up to new convictions—yet the inspiration of earnestness has entered his breast; and, as his convictions become fixed and definite, he will, I doubt not, fling away from him the weight of prejudice and custom, which has oppressed him so cruelly and so long. I venture, then, to predict a future for India of great glory and lustre. And why should not Benares still hold a foremost place in her history? Why should she not take the lead of all Indian cities, as she has ever done, and show, by her example, and for their imitation, how she can abolish useless social burthens, can abandon exploded errors, and can accept the truth in all its forms; how she can strive after and attain

to the highest and purest happiness. I will sum up these remarks on the religious and social condition, and future prospects of India, by an extract from an article in an American Quarterly Review, from the pen of the Rev. Dr. Thomson, who journeyed through India, on a tour of visitation to the missions in that land. Speaking of British ascendancy in India, he writes :—"What will this power effect? Judge by what it has already effected. It has reduced anarchy to order, given law, established justice, protected the land from invasion, and prevented it from being ravaged by intestine wars. It has suppressed suttee and dacoity, forbidden human sacrifices, repressed infanticide and made slavery illegal. It has woven a network of telegraphs around the empire. It has established a regular system of postage for letters, papers, and books, at low charges and uniform rates. It has improved old roads and made new ones, sent steamers up the principal streams, constructed a canal nine hundred miles long, and will probably soon construct others. It has commenced a system of railways embracing about five thousand miles of trunk lines, at a cost of nearly three thousand millions of dollars, which, when completed, will unite the extremes of the Peninsula, open hitherto inaccessible tracts, and bring all parts close to each other and to the civilized world. It has steadily increased the trade of the country,—which, before the days of Clive, could be conveyed in a single Venetian frigate—until it now reaches five hundred millions of dollars annually. It has raised the revenues of the Government to two hundred and fifteen millions. It has given India the newspaper, that grand educator; so that there are twenty-eight newspapers published weekly in Bengal—three of them in English, by the natives—thirty native presses in Madras, and I know not how many in Bombay and Ceylon, and twenty-five presses among the missions alone. It has established schools in all parts of the land, in which those sciences are taught that undermine the pre-

vailing systems of superstition and error. It has made the English language classical in the country; and by this means, it is furnishing the native mind with the rich and christian stores of which that noble tongue is the medium." Look, then, at this great Peninsula, linked to the continent and the world by its languages, commerce and religions; source of the false faiths which, together ensnare six hundred millions of the human race, and the stronghold of a delusion that blinds a hundred and eighty more. There are more Mahommedans under Victoria's sceptre than under any other on earth. The Sultan has but twenty-one millions, she has twenty-five millions at least. There are more heathen under the same Christian Queen than under any other sovereign, except the Emperor of China. And this mass is, all through and through, and more and more, subjected to christian influences. The telegraphs are so many ganglia in a great nervous system, diffusing new sensations; the railways are so many iron arteries, pumping christian blood through the native veins, the newspapers are so many digestive powers, preparing healthful moral food; the schools are so many batteries, thundering at the crumbling battlements of error; the missions are many brains, thinking new and better thoughts." Knowledge must be diffused through the earth. We know two things more, namely, that our religion can withstand modern science, and make it tributary to itself, and that no other religion can; for every other faith has linked its science with its doctrines, so that they must both fall together. As to take Paris is to take France, and to take Sebastopol is to shake Russia to the Arctic seas, so to christianize India, owing to its key position in heathendom, is to shake out the idols from the whole face of the earth.

